

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 SY-02
MCT-01 INR-05 L-01 H-01 NSAE-00 PM-03 PA-01 SP-02
/042 W

-----069770 211058Z /13

P R 210940Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7596
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMCONSUL MEDAN
AMCONSUL SURABAYA
USIA WASHDC
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

S E C R E T JAKARTA 3683

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, PINS, ID, SOPN
SUBJECT: 35 ARRESTED FOR PLANNING BOMBINGS

REF: JAKARTA 3608 (DTG 200911Z MAR 78)

1. SUMMARY. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ARRESTED 35 SUSPECTS FOR PLANNING A TERRORIST BOMBING CAMPAIGN. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE PRIVATELY DENYING THAT ANY BOMBS EXCEPT THAT WHICH EXPLODED MARCH 20 AT THE MPR (SEE REFTEL) HAVE BEEN DETONATED BUT CONFIRM THAT OTHER CRUDE EXPLOSIVE DEVICES HAVE BEEN FOUND. WE ARE INCREASINGLY INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT THE ALLEGED BOMB PLOT MAY BE THE PRELUDE TO A CRACKDOWN ON MOSLEM DISSIDENTS. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE JAKARTA SECURITY COMMAND (LAKSUS) ANNOUNCED ON MARCH 21 THAT 35 SUSPECTS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED FOR "PLANNING ACTS OF TERROR UTILIZING FIREBOMBS, GASOLINE AND 'MOLOTOV COCKTAILS'." TARGETS OF THE PLANNED BOMBINGS ALLEGEDLY INCLUDED "RESIDENTIAL AREAS, SHOPPING CENTERS, HOTELS, RECREATION CENTERS, THE HOME OF THE PRESIDENT,

WAREHOUSES AND PUBLIC VEHICLES." THE BULK OF THE SUSPECTS, ACCORDING TO A LAKSUS SPOKESMAN, ARE "COMMON LABORERS AND MEMBERS OF AN EXTREMIST GROUP WHICH CALLS ITSELF THE GPI," AND SOME OF THEM WERE FOUND TO HAVE EXPLOSIVE DEVICES -- INCLUDING FIREBOMBS AND LEAD PIPES STUFFED WITH GUNPOWDER -- IN THEIR POSSESSION WHEN APPREHENDED. SEVERAL PAPERS CARRY A PICTURE OF ONE OF THE SUSPECTS, A YOUNG, ILL-DRESSED MAN CLUTCHING ONE OF THE EXPLOSIVE DEVICES. THE GOLKAR DAILY SUARA KARYA SAYS THAT STUDENTS AT JAKARTA'S TRISAKTI UNIVERSITY APPREHENDED ONE FIREBOMBER IN THE ACT AT THEIR CAMPUS AND TURNED HIM OVER TO SECURITY AUTHORITIES, AND THE GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED DAILY BERITA YUDHA IDENTIFIES THE GPI AS AN ISLAMIC YOUTH GROUP.

3. AT THE SAME TIME, LAKSUS HAS PUBLICLY DENIED THAT A BOMB EXPLODED AT THE MPR ON THE EVENING OF MARCH 20 (REFTEL). THE LAKSUS SPOKESMAN TERMED THE REPORT OF THE BOMBING "FUNNY" AND SAID, "IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR SOMEONE OUTSIDE THE MPR TO BRING EXPLOSIVE MATERIAL INTO THE MPR COMPLEX. SECURITY IS TOO TIGHT." HE ATTRIBUTED THE INCIDENT AT THE MPR BUILDING TO AN "EXPLODING NEON LIGHT, TRIGGERED BY FAULTY WIRING."

4. CSIS STAFFER HARRY TJAN, HOWEVER, CONFIRMED (WHAT WE ALREADY KNEW) THAT THERE WAS INDEED AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
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DETONATED AT THE MPR. TJAN DENIED, HOWEVER, THAT OTHER BOMBS HAVE BEEN DETONATED IN JAKARTA, DESPITE WIDESPREAD RUMORS OF EXPLOSIONS IN VARIOUS SPOTS (INCLUDING IN FRONT OF THE CSIS BUILDING). HE CONFIRMED THAT SOME VERY CRUDE EXPLOSIVE DEVICES HAVE BEEN FOUND BY POLICE IN THE COURSE OF TIGHT SECURITY CHECKS NOW IN PROGRESS AT VARIOUS PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GATHERING PLACES. THE CHIEF OF USDLG TODAY VIEWED A VEHICLE CARRYING TWO DRUMS OF GASOLINE CONNECTED TO A BATTERY OPERATED DETONATOR WHICH HAD BEEN SIEZED BY POLICE. ACCORDING TO HANKAM SOURCES, TERRORISTS PLANNED TO DETONATE THE CAR IN THE PARKING AREA ADJACENT TO THE HOTEL INDONESIA, WHERE MANY MPR DELEGATES ARE STAYING. ANOTHER EMBASSY OFFICER EARLIER THIS MORNING SAW THE SAME OR A SIMILAR VEHICLE MOMENTARILY ON FIRE IN FRONT OF THE HOTEL INDONESIA. IT WAS QUICKLY EXTINGUISHED BY TOLICE.

5. COMMENT. IT SEEMS INCREASINGLY POSSIBLE THAT THE UNFOLDING BOMB PLOT, WHATEVER THE FACTS BEHIND IT, WILL BE USED BY THE GOVERNMENT AS A PRETEXT FOR A STRONG CRACKDOWN ON MOSLEM OPPOSITIONISTS. IT APPEARS THAT THE ALLEGED PERPETRATORS OF THE PLOT -- THE "GPI" -- WILL BE PORTRAYED AS AN ISLAMIC GROUP. GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN FOR

SOME TIME HAVE BEEN CHARGING THAT MOSLEMS WERE THE CHIEF
INSTIGATORS OF THE WAVE OF STUDENT DISSENT -- INCLUDING
THE RECENT HIGH SCHOOL DISTURBANCES -- WHICH ACCOMPANIED
THE BUILD-UP TO THE MPR, AND TWO PPP MEMBERS OF A WEST
JAVA REGIONAL PARLIAMENT (DPRD) WERE ARRESTED LAST WEEK
ON CHARGES OF INCITING STUDENTS TO TAKE TO THE STREETS.
A PROMINENT MOSLEM POLITICIAN SOME WEEKS AGO EXPRESSED
TO US A FEAR HE SAID WAS COMMON IN ISLAMIC CIRCLES OF A
POST-MPR SUPPRESSION OF MOSLEM POLITICAL ACTIVITY. WITH
SUBVERSION TRIALS FEATURING RADICAL MOSLEM DEFENDANTS
ALREADY IN PROGRESS IN MEDAN AND JAKARTA, THE GOVERNMENT
WOULD SEEM TO HAVE A READY ARSENAL OF EXCUSES AND A
GROWING WILLINGNESS TO CLAMP DOWN ON, OR EVEN ARREST,
PROMINENT MOSLEM OPPOSITIONISTS. WE HAVE EXPRESSED HOPE
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THROUGH APPROPRIATE CHANNELS THAT SUCH STEPS WILL NOT BE
FOUND NECESSARY.
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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOMBING, ARRESTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978JAKART03683
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780124-0114
Format: TEL
From: JAKARTA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780344/aaaabkoi.tel
Line Count: 139
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0cd660c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 78 JAKARTA 3608
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3258915
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: 35 ARRESTED FOR PLANNING BOMBINGS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SOPN, ID
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0cd660c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014